

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2616
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2001
BEHEADING OF INDIANS
RENUKA CHOWDHURY;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware of the beheading of 34 Indians in Saudi Arabia over the last three years on charges of drug-trafficking as reported in the Indian Express dated September 9, 2001;
- (b) if so, whether the issue figured during his visit to Saudi Arabia in January this year, or otherwise at bilateral or multilateral level;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the outcome thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

a) Yes, Sir.

b & c) Yes Sir. The matter regarding execution of Indian nationals on charges of drug trafficking was discussed in general terms during the External Affairs Minister's visit. Later, it has been pursued vigorously through diplomatic channels. In all such cases our Embassy seeks Consular access and also transmits mercy petitions of individuals concerned to the Saudi Government authorities at the highest level.

d) India and Saudi Arabia are finalizing an MOU for cooperation on combating drug trafficking which is likely to be signed in the near future.